

CLAIMS

1. A fuel cell device capable of outputting a signal representing a residual hydrogen amount, 5 comprising:
 - a tank section for accommodating a plurality of hydrogen storage alloys having mutually different hydrogen desorbing characteristics;
 - a power generating section for generating 10 electric power by using hydrogen desorbed from the tank section;
 - a pressure detecting unit for detecting a pressure of the hydrogen supplied to the power generating section; and
- 15 an output section for outputting pressure variations caused on the basis of hydrogen desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys which are detected by the pressure detecting unit.

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2. The fuel cell device capable of outputting a signal representing a residual hydrogen amount according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys are accommodated in the tank section 25 such that a mixing ratio of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys can be changed.

3. The fuel cell device capable of outputting a signal representing a residual hydrogen amount according to claim 1, wherein the tank section has a space for independently accommodating the plurality of 5 hydrogen storage alloys having the different hydrogen desorbing characteristics.

4. The fuel cell device capable of outputting a signal representing a residual hydrogen amount 10 according to claim 1, wherein the output section produces different output signals depending on a plurality of pressure equilibrium states occurring according to the hydrogen desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys.

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5. The fuel cell device capable of outputting a signal representing a residual hydrogen amount according to claim 1, wherein the output section produces signals representing pressure variations in 20 response to changes in a plurality of pressure equilibrium states occurring according to the hydrogen desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys.

25 6. A method for outputting a signal representing a residual fuel cell capacity in a system including a tank section for accommodating a plurality of hydrogen

storage alloys having mutually different hydrogen desorbing characteristics and a power generating section for generating electric power by using hydrogen desorbed from the tank section, comprising:

5 a pressure detecting step of detecting a pressure of the hydrogen supplied to the power generating section; and

an outputting step of outputting pressure variations caused on the basis of hydrogen desorbing

10 characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys which are detected in the pressure detecting step.

7. The method for outputting a signal representing
15 a residual fuel cell capacity according to claim 6,
wherein the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys are
accommodated in the tank section such that a mixing
ratio of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys can
be changed.

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8. The method for outputting a signal representing
a residual fuel cell capacity according to claim 6,
wherein the tank section has a space for independently
accommodating the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys
25 having the different hydrogen desorbing characteristics.

9. The method for outputting a signal representing

a residual fuel cell capacity according to claim 6,
wherein the outputting step produces different output
signals depending on a plurality of pressure
equilibrium states occurring according to the hydrogen
5 desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen
storage alloys.

10. The method for outputting a signal
representing a residual fuel cell capacity according to
10 claim 6, wherein the outputting step produces signals
representing pressure variations in response to changes
in a plurality of pressure equilibrium states occurring
according to the hydrogen desorbing characteristics of
the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys.

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11. An electronic device capable of detecting a
residual capacity of a fuel cell device, comprising:
a tank section for accommodating a plurality
of hydrogen storage alloys having mutually different
20 hydrogen desorbing characteristics;
a power generating section for generating
electric power by using hydrogen desorbed from the tank
section;
a pressure detecting unit for detecting a
25 pressure of the hydrogen supplied to the power
generating section;
a residual amount detecting unit for detecting

a residual hydrogen amount by using pressure variations caused on the basis of hydrogen desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys which are detected by the pressure detecting

5 unit; and

a control unit which operates with the electric power supplied from the power generating section.

10 12. The electronic device capable of detecting a residual capacity of a fuel cell device according to claim 11, wherein the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys are accommodated in the tank section such that a mixing ratio of the plurality of hydrogen storage 15 alloys can be changed.

13. The electronic device capable of detecting a residual capacity of a fuel cell device according to claim 11, wherein the tank section has a space for independently accommodating the plurality of hydrogen 20 storage alloys having the different hydrogen desorbing characteristics.

14. The electronic device capable of detecting a residual capacity of a fuel cell device according to claim 11, further comprising a display unit for displaying a residual hydrogen amount based on a 25

detection result obtained by the residual amount detecting unit.

15. A method for detecting a residual fuel cell capacity of an electronic device including a tank section for accommodating a plurality of hydrogen storage alloys having mutually different hydrogen desorbing characteristics and a power generating section for generating electric power by using hydrogen desorbed from the tank section, comprising:
 - a pressure detecting step of detecting a pressure of the hydrogen supplied to the power generating section;
 - a residual amount detecting step of detecting a residual hydrogen amount by using pressure variations caused on the basis of hydrogen desorbing characteristics of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys which are detected in the pressure detecting step; and
 - a control step of causing a control section to operate with the electric power supplied from the power generating section.

16. The method for detecting a residual fuel cell capacity of an electronic device according to claim 15, wherein the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys are accommodated in the tank section such that a mixing

ratio of the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys can be changed.

17. The method for detecting a residual fuel cell capacity of an electronic device according to claim 15, wherein the tank section has a space for independently accommodating the plurality of hydrogen storage alloys having the different hydrogen desorbing characteristics.

10 18. The method for detecting a residual fuel cell capacity of an electronic device according to claim 15, further comprising a display step of displaying a residual hydrogen amount based on a detection result obtained in the residual amount detect step.